

Water Quality Cooperative Agreements  
US EPA Region 3 NPDES  
FY 2005/2006 Request for Proposals (RFP)

**FINAL**

**September 19, 2005**

**Water Quality Cooperative Agreements  
US EPA Region 3 NPDES  
FY 2005/2006 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

**Overview**

**General Information**

Agency:	U.S. EPA Region 3
Document Type:	Initial Notice
Funding Opportunity Title:	Water Quality Cooperative Agreements US EPA Region 3 NPDES FY 2005 Request for Proposals (RFP)
Funding Opportunity Number:	EPA-R3WPD-05-03 (see <a href="http://www.fedgrants.gov">http://www.fedgrants.gov</a> )
Announcement Type:	Initial Announcement
CFDA Number:	66.463 -- Water Quality Cooperative Agreements
Posted Date:	September 19, 2005
Current Due Date for Applications:	November 3, 2005 (45 days) Proposals must be received by EPA Region 3 by 4:45 PM (COB) November 3, 2005. Proposals received after this date will not be reviewed or considered for funding under this program.
Archive Date:	December 23, 2005 (30 days)
Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement or Grant
Category of Funding Activity:	Environment
Expected Number of Awards:	15
Estimated Total Program Funding:	\$1,161,000.00
Award Ceiling:	\$ 400,000.00
Award Floor:	\$ 30,000.00
Cost Sharing Requirement:	None

**Eligible Applicants**

State water pollution control agencies  
Interstate agencies  
Indian Tribes  
Colleges and universities  
Individuals  
Public organizations  
Nonprofit organizations

**Agency Name**

US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3,  
Water Protection Division, Office of Watersheds (3WP11)  
Attn: Patricia Iraci, CWA Section 104(b)(3) Coordinator  
1650 Arch Street,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029  
Telephone (215) 814-5727  
E-mail [iraci.patricia@epa.gov](mailto:iraci.patricia@epa.gov)

## **Description**

Region 3 is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants interested in applying for Federal assistance for Water Quality Cooperative Agreements (WQCA) under the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 104(b)(3) for unique and innovative projects to be conducted within the states of Delaware (DE), District of Columbia (DC), Maryland (MD), Pennsylvania (PA), Virginia (VA), and West Virginia (WV) that address the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program. Specifically, the Region is requesting projects that will advance NPDES program strategies to implement watershed-based efforts, reduce impacts of wet weather flows, demonstrate collaborative innovative approaches to control or reduce pollution to protect and restore water quality on a watershed basis, etc. Projects awarded assistance under this announcement may involve geospatial information. Region 3 intends to award up to an estimated \$1.161 million to eligible applicants through assistance agreements that may typically range in size from \$30,000 up to \$400,000. From the proposals received, EPA estimates up to 15 projects may be selected to submit full applications. Region 3 reserves the right to award less than the total amount available, to reject all proposals, and to make no awards.

## **Important Dates**

September 19, 2005 – EPA posts the Request for Proposals.

November 3, 2005– Proposals must be received by EPA (45 days).

December 16, 2005– Proposals identified for funding will be requested to submit formal application

January 17, 2006 – Complete application and work plan submitted to EPA (30 days).

February, 2006 -- Final awards processed.

Please note that EPA may modify the schedule at any time.

## **Full Text Announcement**

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### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) Region 3 is soliciting proposals for the CFDA 66.463 Water Quality Cooperative Agreements program under Section 104(b)(3) of the Clean Water Act for projects in Region 3, specifically Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. These funds may be used to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of investigations, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of water pollution.

The purpose of this assistance program is to provide funding for unique and innovative projects that address the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) Permits Program. Specifically, we are seeking unique and innovative proposals for projects to be conducted in DE, DC, MD, PA, VA and WV that will advance NPDES program strategies to implement watershed-based efforts; watershed permitting and trading; storm water programs;

reduce impacts of wet weather flows; NPDES program permitting for environmental results; and demonstrate collaborative innovative approaches to control or reduce pollution to protect and restore water quality on a watershed basis. These priorities and example projects are further defined below.

Funds awarded through this program may not be used to support continuing program operations such as ongoing administrative, program, research or other ineligible costs.

Construction costs, whether or not required to carry out a demonstration project, and acquisition of land are not eligible for funding under this program.

This is a solicitation for proposals only.

This program falls under Goal 2 (Clean and Safe Water), Objective 2 (Protect water Quality), Sub-objective 1 (Improve water quality on a watershed basis), of the strategy that EPA is using to meet the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act. Special emphasis will be on removing barriers to pending NPDES permitting activities.

### **US EPA Region 3 Priorities**

We are seeking unique and innovative projects that may include, but are not limited to, the example projects listed under each priority area below.

#### ***1. Watershed Approaches***

- Development and demonstration of an effective watershed consensus building model that incorporates input from state officials, local leaders, utility managers and associated municipal entities, and watershed stakeholders to determine a unified watershed priority setting process to focus resources to solve the worst conditions first. This could also include demonstration of an innovative process to support development of watershed-based NPDES permits which effectively addresses watershed needs and meets the environmental goals as supported by stakeholders.
- Case studies that demonstrate and document the benefits of innovative pollution control applications or management approaches involving wastewater utilities to implement Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

#### ***2. Innovative wastewater treatment practices, efficiencies and training***

- Tools, techniques, benchmarking, education or training to promote more efficient or cost-effective wastewater treatment, nutrient controls, biosolids management, and other systems performance.
- Tools, techniques, and benchmarking approaches to evaluate the effectiveness of stormwater and other wet weather best management practices, including measures of the costs and environmental benefits of such practices.

#### ***3. Watershed Permitting & Trading***

- Develop and demonstrate the application of an innovative watershed-based permit with particular emphasis on identifying barriers and obstacles, and develop training and technical assistance tools that will help States and local authorities to address these barriers and obstacles.

Proposed projects are expected to include:

- organizing a watershed approach that produces a watershed permit [total maximum daily load (TMDL) development will not be funded];
- watershed approaches to storm water permitting;
- use of a permitting mechanism to simultaneously consider all discharges in a watershed with respect to water quality standards; or
- use of effluent trading focused on point/nonpoint trading as well as other trading options.

#### **4. Storm Water Programs**

- Develop information and tools accessible and useable by State and local authorities that increase efficiencies for managing NPDES storm water programs, especially in areas where TMDLs have been developed for stormwater-based pollutants and/or in communities with MS4 permits. Proposed projects are expected to include:
- development of tools that compare the effectiveness of storm water best management practices (BMPs) in varying circumstances that focus on pollutants of concern, particularly nutrients and sediment;
- demonstration of state approaches to evaluate municipal programs, including implementation of minimum measures, formats for annual reports, audit protocols, and tracking and reporting systems;
- development of a model comprehensive monitoring program for Phase II communities that includes documentation of water quality improvements along with a process to focus future implementation efforts.

#### **5. Low Impact Development**

- Case studies that examine the long-term costs and benefits of low impact development approaches to storm water control, which evaluate both economic and water quality benefits.

#### **6. Municipal Wet Weather Programs**

- Conduct management system demonstration projects for municipalities to address wet weather operations. Proposals should address Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s), combined sewer systems, capacity management operations and maintenance (CMOM) programs for sanitary sewers, and/or CMOM programs for sewage treatment facilities. Proposed projects are expected to include:
- demonstration project that includes protocols for water quality- related environmental indicators, with emphasis on physical and biological indicators, that can be used in lieu of wet weather sampling, to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of storm water and other wet weather programs; or
- innovative methods of implementing TMDLs in communities with combined sewer overflows; or
- demonstration projects on implementing wet weather projects in rural, small, and economically distressed communities.

#### **7. NPDES Program Permitting for Environmental Results (PER)**

- Projects to implement State PER Action Plans that facilitate NPDES program management for enhanced results, integrity, and/or efficiency, based on state NPDES program management self assessments (Profiles).

See: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/per.cfm>

### **Environmental Results**

All applicants are required to link their projects to environmental results. Environmental results are used as a way to gauge a project's performance using output and outcome measures. The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specific date. The term "outcome" means an environmental result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective.

Region 3 expects these projects for innovations, demonstrations, and studies to directly and indirectly benefit the environment by accelerating the reduction of point and non-point waste loads on surface waters, and by improving the definition of water quality goals.

For example, an expected output would be the number of Best Management Practices (BMPs) installed, while the expected outcome would be sediment reduction resulting in improved water quality. Another expected output would be development of a watershed monitoring and

assessment strategy, while the expected outcome would be increased knowledge resulting in more effective water quality monitoring decisions.

For some projects, the expected outcomes are to expand the number of organizations and people with a potential to participate in the federal waste reduction effort, and/or to increase the effectiveness of organizations and people already involved. The specific outputs expected from these projects are reducing wastewater permits backlogs, better coordinating and considering endangered species in permitting, or accelerating state or tribal primacy of federal permitting - depending on the priority area addressed.

For other projects, the expected outcomes are improved definition of water quality goals, strategies, solutions, and problems. The specific outputs expected from these projects are improved timeliness of actions on water quality standards, more complete waste load allocations, better consideration of endangered species in standards, or improved definition of on-site-related water quality problems - depending on the priority area addressed. Proposals must have plans to further define and measure one or more of these environmental outputs/results.

Environmental results not only assess the success of an applicant's project, they also gauge the effectiveness of EPA's programs by ensuring that EPA's limited resources are used to further the Agency's Strategic Goals. The Strategic Goal for the Water Quality Cooperative Agreements is:

Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water

Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality

Sub-objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis

For more information on EPA's Strategic Plan go to: <http://www.epa.gov/ocfoipage/plan/plan.htm>

Therefore, all proposed projects must demonstrate how they will result in clean and safe water.

## **II. Award Information**

EPA Region 3's Office of Watersheds intends to award to eligible applicants assistance agreements ranging in size from \$30,000 to \$400,000 for CFDA 66.463 Water Quality Cooperative Agreements (WQCA). The total funds available are estimated as \$1.161 million. Should additional funding become available for awards under this announcement within 4 months of the initial award selection decision, the Agency may award additional assistance agreements based on this announcement in accordance with the final selection process and agency policy, without further notice or competition. Region 3 WQCA project awards have ranged from \$30,000 to \$300,000 and averaged about \$120,000 over the last 3 years. From the proposals received, EPA estimates that 15 projects may be selected to submit full applications. Proposals must address the Region 3 Priorities outlined in Section I of this RFP to be considered.

This program provides funding for short-term projects with a duration of 3 years or less to advance innovation and improvements in water quality programs. Projects funded under Section 104(b)(3) are to "...conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution."

Proposed projects should be designed to be completed within the scope of the assistance and project period proposed. No additional funding for this program is anticipated.

EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of the proposed project. If EPA decides to partially fund the proposal/application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and the evaluation/selection process.

Region 3 reserves the right to award less than the total amount available, to reject all proposals, and/or to make no awards.

Cooperative Agreements and Grants are types of assistance agreements; they are different. Cooperative agreements include substantial involvement by EPA; Grants do not. The type of assistance agreement that will be issued to award assistance for the selected proposals will be determined by the Project Officer based upon the scope and circumstances of each selected proposal.

EPA Region 3 will work closely with the recipient organization during the finalization of the work plan to determine EPA's involvement with the project. If it is determined that there will be no substantial EPA involvement, the assistance agreement will be awarded as a grant. If it is determined substantial involvement is anticipated between EPA and the recipient organization during the performance of the approved activities, the assistance agreement will be awarded as a cooperative agreement.

Upon receipt of a complete application, work plan, and budget, the recommendations for funding of the award will be made to the Regional Administrator. When all funding decisions are complete, a grant award notification will be issued to the recipients. This is the conclusion of the competitive award process. and begins the grant performance period.

A listing of successful proposals will be posted on the EPA Region 3 website address: <http://www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/> at the conclusion of the competition. This website may also contain information about this announcement including information concerning deadline extensions or other modifications.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

#### **Eligible Applicants**

US EPA Region 3 is soliciting proposals from State water pollution control agencies, interstate agencies, tribes, colleges and universities, individuals, and other public or nonprofit organizations interested in applying for Federal assistance for Water Quality Cooperative Agreements (CFDA 66.463) under the Clean Water Act Section 104(b)(3).

In order to be eligible, Interstate agency projects must be broad in scope and encompass more than one State, or local government.

Applicants who have an existing agreement under this program are eligible to compete for new awards.

The applicant must be eligible for award consideration at the time of proposal submission or they will not be considered for funding.

#### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

Cost sharing is encouraged but is not required. Applicants will be evaluated on their ability to leverage funds (see Section V Criteria for more information).

#### **Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

Proposals must address one of the Region 3 Priorities described in Section I of this RFP. Proposals that do not address one of the Priorities will not be considered for funding.

Proposals to purchase land, to perform construction, that fail to conform to the submission requirements of this announcement or appear to be from a for-profit organization will not be reviewed or considered.

Proposals to conduct work or to benefit waters outside the geographic area of Region 3 (DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV) will not be reviewed or considered.

Applications that do not substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement will be rejected. In addition, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to parts of the application, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Proposals must be received by the EPA on or before the solicitation closing date published in Section IV of this announcement.

#### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

##### **Address to Request Application Package**

Only proposals are being requested at this time. There is no application form or package available or necessary. The requested format and information is discussed below.

##### **Contents and Form of Application Submission**

Proposals should be limited to 10 pages (single-sided equivalent), single-spaced, and 10 - 12 size font. Full assistance application packages should not be submitted at this time. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals ranging in size from \$30,000 to \$400,000. Applicants should be sure to address the relevance of their project to the selection criteria outlined in section V.

The contents may vary slightly with different types of projects. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this in the proposal.

The following format must be followed:

##### **1. Name of project**

a) Include a concise (100 word maximum) summary of the project

##### **2. Contact information (Individual and organization name, address phone, fax and email)**

##### **3. Proposed Budget**

- a) Identify all federal and other funding sources for the project including the recipient cost-share.
- b) Identify categories for funding distribution (supplies, contractual, equipment, staff, etc).
- c) Identify cost and labor effort budgets by task
- d) Identify applicant contributions. Cost-sharing is not required but will contribute to the strength of a proposal and commitment to the project.

##### **4. Project Description**

- a) Describe of the project area
- b) Describe how the project relates to one of the regional priorities identified in Section I
- c) Describe components of the project, a project narrative containing
  - Brief description of environmental issue(s) of concern;
  - Project Goals and Objectives (describe in measurable terms the environmental issue to be addressed);
  - Project Tasks (outline the steps you will take to meet the project goals);
  - Commitments (milestones and outputs for each Task)



- Schedule (when you expect to complete significant steps, tasks and milestones/ outputs)
- d) Describe how the project fits with relevant planning and water quality management goals
- e) Describe any partnerships, community support etc.
- f) Describe applicant's capability to perform the work
- Brief description of staffing and funding resources available to implement the proposed project including the number of workers and staff qualifications (no resumes are required)
- Brief description of organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to implement the proposed project.
- Brief description of the applicant organization, experience related to the area of interest, and the organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to implement the proposed project.
- g) Brief description of the information relating to the programmatic capability criteria in Section V. Criteria. EPA will consider information provided by the applicant and may consider other sources, such as Agency files.
- h) Describe the respective roles and responsibilities of the applicant, partners (if applicable) and EPA (if applicable) in carrying out the project commitment(s).

## 5. Outcomes/Results Tracking and Reporting

- a) Plan for tracking, measuring, and reporting progress toward achieving expected outcomes/outputs and results. Proposals must address the applicant's past performance in documenting the achievement of expected outcomes/outputs including, if applicable, satisfactory explanations of why outcomes/outputs were not achieved. Provide list of public agencies that have previously awarded assistance to applicant and documentation that proves past performance with those awards were successful.
- b) Describe past performance in filing timely progress reports and final technical reports that document the achievement of expected outcomes/outputs or a satisfactory explanation of why the outcomes/outputs were not achieved.
- c) Describe the expected environmental outputs/outcome from the project in terms of those listed in Section I of this announcement. Describe how they will be measured and accomplished as a result of the project.

## 6. Outreach, Communication and Information Transfer

- a) Plan for distributing project results to the public and interested parties. This plan must include a detailed description as to how the applicant proposes to ensure the transfer of knowledge gained by the project.

## 7. Confidential Business Information

EPA recommends that no confidential information be included in proposals. However, in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their project submission as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. Note that under Public Law No. 105-277, data produced under an award is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

## Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received by EPA Region 3 by 4:45 PM Central Daylight Savings Time (close of business) on Thursday, November 3, 2005. Proposals received after this date will not be reviewed or considered for funding under this program.

## **Funding Restrictions**

EPA Region 3 intends to award to eligible applicants assistance agreements ranging in size from \$30,000 to \$400,000, with a duration of 3 years or less, for CFDA 66.463 Water Quality Cooperative Agreements. The total funds available are estimated as \$1,161,000. From the proposals received, EPA estimates up to 15 projects may be selected to submit full applications. Both new and renewal proposals will be accepted for consideration. Proposals must address the priorities outlined in this RFP to be considered.

A non-federal contribution is not required but will contribute to the strength of a proposal. Applicants will be evaluated on their ability to leverage funds (See Section V Criteria for more information).. The applicant share must be for an allowable cost and may be provided by the applicant or an eligible partner organization or institution. The applicant share may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions and other non-cash support. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs and this value must be carefully documented. If the match is provided by a partner organization, the applicant is still responsible for proper accountability and documentation.

Other Federal money cannot be used as the applicant's share for this grant program unless authorized by the statute governing the award of the other Federal funds. Any restrictions on the use of federal share funds also apply to the use of applicant's share funds.

Funds awarded through this program may not be used to support continuing program operations such as ongoing administrative, program, research or other ineligible costs.

Construction costs, whether or not required to carry out a demonstration project, and acquisition of land are not eligible for funding under this program.

All assistance agreements are subject to Federal audit.

## **Intergovernmental Review**

Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs may be applicable to awards, resulting from this announcement. Applicants selected for funding may be required to provide a copy of their proposal to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) or the States where the project will be conducted for review, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required with the proposal and not all states require such a review.

## **Other Submission Requirements**

Submit the proposals in hard-copy only (no electronic or fax submittal). Send three copies (double-sided printing is encouraged) of the proposals to:

Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3,  
Water Protection Division, Office of Watersheds (3WP11)  
Attn: Patricia Iraci, CWA 104(b)(3) Coordinator  
1650 Arch Street,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

Proposals must be received by EPA by 4:45 PM Central Daylight Savings Time (close of business) Thursday, November 3, 2005. Proposals received after this date will not be reviewed or considered for funding under this program.

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **Criteria**

EPA will award CFDA 66.463 Water Quality Cooperative Agreement assistance on a competitive basis. The competition process is regulated under 40 CFR 35.362. The following criteria will be considered on a 100 point scale:

30 points: How well the applicant has defined a plan for performing the proposed project, results tracking and reporting, and ability to specify well-defined outputs and well-defined outcomes (results), as outlined in the proposal guidelines; to support reasonable expectation that meaningful environmental benefit will result from the proposed work and results will be of demonstrable (defensible) quality.

20 points: The degree to which the project addresses one of the regional priorities identified in Section I. Project benefits, technical feasibility, adherence to total cost guidance, etc.

10 Points: Measurement, tracking and documentation of concrete environmental results, outcomes, and outputs (see Section I of this announcement).

5 points: Leverage of other resources (e.g., cost share, participation by other organizations) and cost effectiveness of the proposal.

Under this criteria, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate (i) how they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will compliment activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants)

5 points: Communication plan for distributing results of the project. How well the plan transfers knowledge gained as a result of the project to relevant and interested communities.

30 points: Capability of the applicant to effectively perform and complete the tasks and deliver the products of the project, and effectively manage the cooperative agreement. This will include (i) past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, (ii) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations and submitting acceptable final technical reports, (iii) organization experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, (iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project.

The proposals will be evaluated by EPA staff on the elements shown above. EPA staff will also consider the following factors in their evaluations: programmatic priorities, project diversity, program diversity and geographic diversity.

### **Review and Selection Process**

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated and ranked by a panel comprised of EPA employees. The review panel will base its evaluation on the selection criteria disclosed in this notice (Section V). Final selection decisions, which will be made by EPA Region 3 staff, will be based on the evaluations conducted by the review panel and may also take into account the other factors

described in Section V such as programmatic priorities, project diversity, program diversity and geographic diversity.

All applicants will be notified when the selection process is complete.

### **Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

September 19, 2005 – EPA posts the Request for Proposals.

November 3, 2005 – Proposals must be received by EPA (45 days).

December 16, 2005 – Proposals identified for funding will be requested to submit a formal application

January 17, 2006 – Complete assistance application and work plan submitted to EPA (30 days).

February 2006 -- Final awards processed.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **Award Notices**

Proposals that are selected for continuance in the process will be sent an application kit for funding. These applicants must submit a detailed work plan and the completed application for funding. Receipt of an application kit is not a guarantee of funding, and is not an authorization to begin work or incur project costs.

Deadlines must be met, qualifications must be verified, the work plan must be approved by the EPA Project Officer, and financial assistance awarded for funding to occur.

Cooperative Agreements and Grants are types of assistance agreements; they are different. Cooperative agreements include substantial involvement by EPA; Grants do not. The type of assistance agreement that will be issued to award assistance for the selected proposals will be determined by the Project Officer based upon the scope and circumstances of each selected proposal.

EPA Region 3 will work closely with the recipient organization during the finalization of the work plan to determine EPA's involvement with the project. If it is determined that there will be no substantial EPA involvement, the assistance agreement will be awarded as a grant. If it is determined substantial involvement is anticipated between EPA and the recipient organization during the performance of the approved activities, the assistance agreement will be awarded as a cooperative agreement.

As part of a formal application, applicants will be required to complete the "Environmental Results in Assistance Agreements" template. More information will be provided if your organization is selected.

Upon receipt of a complete application, work plan, and budget, the recommendations for funding of the award will be made to the Regional Administrator. When all funding decisions are complete, a grant award notification will be issued to the recipients for acceptance. This is the conclusion of the competitive award process.

A listing of successful proposals will be posted on the EPA Region 3 website address: <http://www.epa.gov/reg3wapd> at the conclusion of the competition. This website may also contain information about this announcement including information concerning deadline extensions or other modifications.

## **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

### **Statutory Authority and Applicable Regulations**

Water Quality Cooperative Agreement projects are authorized under the Clean Water Act, Section 104(b)(3). Regulations governing the award and administration of Water Quality Cooperative

Agreements are 40 CFR Part 30 for institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other non-profit organizations; 40 CFR Part 31 for state and local governments; 40 CFR Part 35, Subpart A for state, interstate, and local government agencies; and 40 CFR Part 35, Subpart B for tribes.

### **Non-profit Applicants**

Non-profit applicants which are recommended for funding may, depending upon the size of the award, be required to complete and submit an Administrative Capability Form and supporting documents or may be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews in accordance with Sections 8.b, 8.c and 9.d of EPA Order 5700.8 "EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards." Which can be found at [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700\\_8.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf)

### **Indirect Costs**

If indirect costs are budgeted in the assistance application (grant or cooperative agreement) and the non-profit organization or educational institute does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan will need to be prepared and submitted in accordance with the appropriate Federal cost principle, OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" or OMB Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions" within ninety (90) days from the effective date of the award.

If a local government does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments." The local government recipient whose cognizant Federal agency has been designated by OMB must develop and submit its indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency within six (6) months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year. If the cognizant Federal agency has not been identified by OMB, the local government recipient must still develop (and when required, submit) its proposal within that period.

### **Peer Review**

Most documents or products prepared for and intended for public distribution under EPA Region 3 assistance agreements will be subject to the peer review process. Some products/documents produced under this grant program may be exempted from peer review process. Assistance agreement applicants should allow an eight-week time period in project schedules for each product which is subject to the peer review process. Concurrent review of multiple project products is possible. Scheduling preliminary submission of draft documents to the project officer throughout the project period will facilitate the peer review process.

### **Quality Assurance**

If environmental research including direct measurements or data generation, environmental modeling, compilation of data from literature or electronic media, and data supporting the design, construction, and operation of environmental technologies is to be performed as part of the

funding agreement, a Quality Assurance Project Plan and submission date to EPA for approval must be identified unless the organization can show a previously EPA approved Quality Management Plan. No federal funds may be expended or requested for reimbursement for data collection or environmental sampling activities prior to submittal, and approval, of the Quality Assurance Project Plan to/by the EPA Project Officer.

### **Copyrights**

EPA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes in accordance with 40 CFR 31.34 (a). The copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or subgrant; and (b) Any rights of copyright to which a recipient, subrecipient or a contractor purchases ownership with federal support.

### **Data Sharing**

All recipients of these assistance agreements will be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final work plan. Additionally, recipients of grants for monitoring projects will be required to submit all data from monitoring activities to STORET (short for STOrage and RETrieval). STORET provides an accessible, nationwide central repository of water quality, biological and other physical data of known quality for use by State environmental agencies, EPA and other Federal agencies, universities, private citizens, and many other organizations. Grantee submission of monitoring data into STORET or monitoring data made available in the Advisory Council for Water Information (ACWI) Core Monitoring Data Element Standard (or Data Exchange Template) will facilitate exchange of monitoring data between EPA and its partners. Applicants may also want to contact their State agency responsible for entering data into the system. Information on STORET is at <http://www.epa.gov/storet> and information on the standard is at <http://www.epa.gov/edr>.

### **Geospatial Information**

If geospatial information will result from the proposed project, the selected project will have to meet EPA requirements for such information. The definition of geospatial information is provided in Section VIII below. For the projects selected for funding, the full assistance application must identify any geospatial information that will be created.

### **DUNS Number Requirement**

All applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number when applying for a Federal assistance agreement. Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or visiting the D&B website at: <http://www.dnb.com>.

### **Reporting**

Quarterly electronic and hard copy performance and project status reports and Financial Status Reports will be required to illustrate their progress and document any issues or challenges in accordance with 40 CFR 31.40 and a final report in accordance with 40 CFR 31.41. Quarterly reports should describe project activities and provide the EPA Project Officer with information about project development. The Financial Status Report must accurately account for all federal funds expended and identify appropriate use of federal funds. Other reporting will be established by the Project Officer through the assistance agreement. Recipients will be required to report direct and indirect environmental benefits, outcomes, and outputs that result from the work accomplished through the cooperative agreement award. An EPA Project Officer will work with the applicant to achieve the project goals and to provide necessary technical assistance.

## **Disputes**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at:

<http://11a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/0ljan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/051371.htm>.

Copies may also be requested by contacting the Agency Contact below.

## **VII. Agency Contact(s)**

For additional information on this solicitation, please contact:

Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3,  
Water Division, Office of Watersheds (3WP11),  
Attn: Patricia Iraci, CWA Section 104(b)(3) Coordinator,  
1650 Arch Street,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029  
Telephone (215)-814-5727  
E-mail [iraci.patricia@epa.gov](mailto:iraci.patricia@epa.gov)

For alternate contacts, or contacts on specialized topics, consult the text of this announcement or call the number above for advice.

Contact on NPDES topics:

Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3,  
Water Division, Office of Watersheds (3WP11),  
Attn: Brian Trulear, NPDES Coordinator,  
1650 Arch Street,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029  
Telephone (215)-814-5723  
E-mail [trulear.brian@epa.gov](mailto:trulear.brian@epa.gov)

## **VIII. Other Information**

EPA Region 3 reserves the right to award less than the total amount of funds available as a result of this announcement. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and/or make no award as a result of this announcement. EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of the proposed project. If EPA decides to partially fund the proposal/application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and the evaluation/selection process. The EPA Award Official is the only official that can bind the Agency to the expenditure of funds for selected projects resulting from this announcement.

## **Geospatial Information**

Information that identifies the geographic location and characteristics of natural or constructed features or boundaries on the Earth, or applications, tools, and hardware associated with the generation, maintenance, or distribution of such information. This information may be derived from, among other things, GPS, remote sensing, mapping, charting, and surveying technologies, or statistical data.

**Dated: /s/ Jon M. Capacasa, 9/9/05**

Jon M. Capacasa, Director  
Water Protection Division  
EPA Award Official